

Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EUR-25 NIC-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 CU-04 PM-09 H-02

L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4108

INFO CINCSO

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 0950

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, UY

SUBJ: PRESIDENT DENOUNCES CNT STRIKE; GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO
CONSIDER QUESTION OF INDIVIDUAL GUARANTEES

CINCSO FOR POLAD

REF: MVD 904

1. ADDRESSING NATION VIA RADIO AND TV EVENING MARCH 28, PRESIDENT BORDABERRY DIRECTED A BROAD- SIDE AGAINST STRIKES CALLED BY COMMUNIST- LED CNT CONFEDERATION AND IN PARTICULAR AGAINST STRIKE SCHEDULED FOR TODAY (MARCH 29). MAIN PLANK IN STRIKE PLATFORM OF MARCH 29 IS IMMEDIATE RESIGNATION OF BORDABERRY, AND PRESIDENT' S SPEECH TOOK FORM OF PERSONAL COUNTER- ATTACK. HE DENOUNCED CNT STRIKES AS POLITICAL WEAPONS OF AN " INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL PARTY". THESE STRIKES, HE SAID, ARE CONTRARY TO THE WISHES OF WORKINGMEN WHO ARE COMPELLED TO ACCEPT THEM BECAUSE OF ABSENCE OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK. PRESIDENT DECRIED 2.8 BILLION PESO LOSS TO URUGUAYDUE TO WORK STOPPAGES DURING 1972. THE THE ARMED FORCES, HE SAID, WERE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT THAT THIS ABUSE OF CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS COULD NOT CONTINUE AND THAT RIGHT OF STRIKE SHOULD BE REGULATED BY LAW, AS PROVIDED BY THE
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CONSTITUTION.

2. STRIKE TODAY IS UNLIKE GENERAL STRIKES CALLED BY CNT IN THE PAST IN THAT CNT MADE NO EFFORT TO CLOSE DOWN COMMERCE AND BUSINESS IN DOWNTOWN MONTEVIDEO PRIOR TO 1700 HOURS. BUSES INTERRUPTED THEIR SERVICE ONLY BETWEEN 0900 AND 1200, ALLOWING

PEOPLE TO GET TO WORK. PRINCIPAL WORK STOPPAGES OCCURRED IN CNT- ORGANIZED FACTORIES WHICH ARE BEING OCCUPIED THROUGHOUT

THE DAY. NON- CNT PLANTS ARE WORKING NORMALLY. CNT, WITH SUPPORT OF " FRENTE AMPLIO" AND STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, HAS SCHEDULED A MARCH TERMINATING IN A RALLY AT THE UNIVERSITY, EVENING OF MARCH 19. GOU HAS RESTRICTED AREAS WHERE MARCH MAY PROCEED AND REQUIRED CNT TO POSTPONE IT UNTIL 1900 HOURS. ASIDE FROM RESIGNATION OF BORDABERRY AND OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED " CONSOLIDATION OF PEACE" LAW (MVD 890), CNT' S STRIKE PLATFORM IS REHASH OF OLD THEMES. AS ON PAST OCCASIONS, DEMOCRATIC CUT CONFERATION HAS DENOUNCED CNT STRIKE.

3. COMMENT: THE CNT IS CARRYING OUT MARCH 29 STRIKE DESPITE EXPRESS " INVITATION" OF MILITARY NOT TO DO SO (REFTEL). ISSUE OF CNT' S RELATIONS WITH THE MILITARY IS A DIVISIVE ONE FOR THE COMMUNIST- LED CENTRAL, AND IT WAS PROBABLY POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR CNT LEADERSHIP TO CALL- OFF STRIKE WITHOUT SERIOUSLY EXPOSING ITSELF TO ATTACK FROM ITS MORE RADICAL OPPOSITION. IN ANNOUNCING DECISION TO GO AHEAD WITH STRIKE, CNT REITERATED ITS COMMITMENT TO GOALS WHICH IT CLAIMS TO SHARE WITH THE MILITARY IMPLICIT IN CNT' S PRONOUNCEMENTS IS DISCLAIMER THAT IT INTENDS ANY DISRESPECT TO THE MILITARY. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE THAT PRESIDENT' S DENUNCIATION OF CNT' S STRIKES REFLECTS VIEWS OF MILITARY AND THAT HONEYMOON BETWEEN CNT- PCU AND THE MILITARY (IF IT EVER EXISTED) IS ON THE WANE. MARCH 29 STRIKE WILL ADD IMPETUS TO GOU EFFORTS TO PASS NEW LABOR LEGISLATION.

4. WHILE CNT RALLY IN PROGRESS, GENERAL ASSEMBLY WILL BE MEETING TO CONSIDER PRESIDENT' S LATEST REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN CONSTITUTIONALLY- GUARANTEED CIVIL RIGHTS. DECISION YESTERDAY BY BLANCO GROUPS IN PRESIDENT' S " NATIONAL ACCORD" TO CONTINUE THEIR SUPPORT MAKES IT APPEAR LIKELY THAT EXTENSION WILL BE APPROVED, BUT ONLY AFTER BITTER AND PROLONGED DEBATE. MEETING WILL PROBABLY PROVIDE FORUM FOR FURTHER
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ATTACKS ON MILITARY BY COLORADO SENATOR VASCONCELLOS, AS WELL AS DENUNCIATIONS FROM BLANCO OPPOSITION OVER PRESIDENT' S BLUNT LETTER YESTERDAY TO SENATOR FERREIRA ALDUNATE. AT SAME TIME, WE ARE HEARING VARIOUS RUMORS REGARDING ALLEGED SERIOUS DISSENTION WITHIN RANKS OF SENIOR MILITARY LEADERS OVER TACTICS WHICH THEY SHOULD ADOPT VIZ A VIZ THE CONGRESS.
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